Lloyd George Meets Hitler

David Lloyd George
Prime Minister of England During World War I

Comments on His Visit to Germany and Meeting With Hitler in 1936

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This article shows the huge levels of support that Hitler had in influential circles outside of Germany.

Former British prime minister Lloyd George met Adolf Hitler in September 1936. In a piece written for the *Daily Express* newspaper, Lloyd offers his reflections on Hitler.

I have just returned from a visit to Germany. In so short time one can only form impressions or at least check impressions which years of distant observation

through the telescope of the Press and constant inquiry from those who have seen things at a closer range had already made on one's mind.

I have now seen the famous German leader and also something of the great change he has effected. Whatever one may think of his methods – and they are certainly not those of a parliamentary country – there can be no doubt that he has achieved a marvelous transformation in the spirit of the people, in their attitude towards each other, and in their social and economic outlook.

He rightly claimed at Nuremberg that in four years his movement had made a new Germany. It is not the Germany of the first decade that followed the war – broken, dejected and bowed down with a sense of apprehension and impotence. It is now full of hope and confidence, and of a renewed sense of determination to lead its own life without interference from any influence outside its own frontiers.

There is for the first time since the war a general sense of security. The people are more cheerful. There is a greater sense of general gaiety of spirit throughout the land. It is a happier Germany. I saw it everywhere and Englishmen I met during my trip and who knew Germany well were very impressed with the change.

One man has accomplished this miracle. He is a born leader of men. A magnetic and dynamic personality with a single-minded purpose, a resolute will and a dauntless heart. He is not merely in name but in fact the national Leader. He has made them safe against potential enemies by whom they were surrounded. He is also securing them against the constant dread of starvation which is one of the most poignant memories of the last years of the War and the first years of the Peace.

Over 700,000 died of sheer hunger in those dark years. You can still see the effect in the physique of those who were born into that bleak world. The fact that Hitler has rescued his country from the fear of a repetition of that period of despair,

penury and humiliation has given him an unchallenged authority in modern Germany.

As to his popularity, especially among the youth of Germany, there can be no manner of doubt. The old trust him; the young idolise him. It is not the admiration accorded to a popular Leader. It is the worship of a national hero who has saved his country from utter despondency and degradation.

It is true that public criticism of the Government is forbidden in every form. That does not mean that criticism is absent. I have heard the speeches of prominent Nazi orators freely condemned. But not a word of criticism or of disapproval have I heard of Hitler. He is as immune from criticism as a king in a monarchical country. He is something more. He is the George Washington of Germany – the man who won for his country independence from all her oppressors

To those who have not actually seen and sensed the way Hitler reigns over the heart and mind of Germany, this description may appear extravagant. All the same, it is the bare truth. This great people will work better, sacrifice more, and, if necessary, fight with greater resolution because Hitler asks them to do so. Those who do not comprehend this central fact cannot judge the present possibilities of modern Germany.

On the other hand, those who imagine that Germany has swung back to its old Imperialist temper cannot have any understanding of the character of the change. The idea of a Germany intimidating Europe with a threat that its irresistible army might march across frontiers forms no part of the new vision.

What Hitler said at Nuremberg is true. The Germans will resist to the death every invader at their own country, but they have no longer the desire themselves to invade any other land. The leaders of modern Germany know too well that Europe is too formidable a proposition to be overrun and trampled down by any single

nation, however powerful may be its armaments. They have learned that lesson in the war.

Hitler fought in the ranks throughout the war, and knows from personal experience what war means. He also knows too well that the odds are even heavier today against an aggressor than they were at that time. What was then Austria would now be in the main hostile to the ideals of 1914.

The Germans are under no illusions about Italy. They also are aware that the Russian Army is in every respect far more efficient than it was in 1914. The establishment of a German hegemony in Europe which was the aim and dream of the old pre-war militarism, is not even on the horizon of Nazism.

That impression more than anything I witnessed during my short visit to the new Germany. There was a revivalist atmosphere. It had an extraordinary effect in unifying the nation. Catholic and Protestant, Prussian and Bavarian, employer and workman, rich and poor, have been consolidated into one people. Religious, provincial and class origins no longer divide the nation. There is a passion for unity born of dire necessity.

I have never met a happier people than the Germans and Hitler is one of the greatest men.

Freedom Truth Justice

Humain souverain English

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